

to be ready always to defend himself, and is less inhibited by anxiety. In spite of the practical difficulties it creates for the grown-up in charge, and the disorderly air it wears to the casual visitor, this aggressive behaviour is yet the most promising first response from a young child who has not already had plenty of social experience among his fellows. It presages an active and vigorous social life in the not distant future—under careful handling. (It is another matter, of course, when this attitude persists indefinitely, or remains the main response to the overtures of other children.)

So much for mere description. But why should it happen so ? Why should little children from happy homes feel so immediately hostile on entering a group of other children ? We can hardly rest content with simply noting the fact.

It has sometimes been suggested to me that this initially hostile behaviour of young children to each other might be regarded as a form of *experimental play*—an attempt to find out what the other animals are like, with perhaps an insurance against risks by assuming that they are dangerous until proved otherwise. This seems to me true as far as it goes; but it does not go nearly far enough. It might perhaps account for such a piece of behaviour as that of Joseph and Phineas on 29.4.27. "Lena and Joseph (Joseph's first term) were playing in the sand-pit when Phineas arrived. As soon as Phineas approached, Joseph stiffened aggressively and clenched his fists. They both eyed each other up and down hostilely for several seconds, then Joseph relaxed, Phineas moved away, and they each went on with his own pursuit. No word was spoken." But in itself it would hardly account for the real fights and mutual injuries of

the three two-year-olds, for example (p. 59), or for the earnestness and frequency of attack found among the children in these school records. Deeper and more permanent motives need to be looked for, Unking up this behaviour with what comes before it in the child's life, and what follows after it.

The key is surely to be found in the family situation. The immediate hostility of a young child to others is only to be understood in terms of the motive of *rivalry* for the love of the adults, and primarily, of course, of the parents. It is the young child's utter dependence upon the love and care of adults, his absolute need to possess them and their love, that makes the mere presence of another child seem to him a